



**RESPECT:** Banners are lowered as a mark of respect for those who have fought and died for our freedom. Ref:90850/31



**IN MEMORY:** Wreaths are laid at the foot of the Maidenhead memorial on Remembrance Sunday. Ref:90850/15

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# We remember

The town came out in force to remember its fallen heroes. **Victoria Vaughan** reports

A CRISP November morning greeted crowds who gathered around war memorials to remember those who have fought and died for our country's freedom. More than 300 Maidenians were at the memorial cross outside the town hall in St Ives Road to pay their respects on Remembrance Sunday. The parade of scouts, air, army and sea cadets and members of St John Ambulance all stood to attention after marching around the town. A fire engine and a St John Ambulance support vehicle brought up the rear of the parade, which was marshalled by police and led by the Salvation Army band. The choir of SS Andrew and Mary Magdalene Borough Church led the procession of councillors out from the town hall to encircle the memorial. The Reverend Will Stileman led the service and asked those present to remember the courage and devotion of our people in times of stress and danger and to pay tribute to those who lay down their lives in the cause of justice and freedom. After the national anthem and a hymn, The Last Post was played by a bugler and in the distance the church bells chimed 11am as the town came to a standstill for two minutes of silence. After prayers, the first wreath was laid at the foot of the memorial cross by the Borough's Deputy Mayor Cllr Beverley Green.



**ON PARADE:** Sea cadets stand to attention. Ref:90850/5



**SILENCE:** Two minutes of silence were observed on Armistice Day. Ref:90836/26



# our heroes



Some 16 wreaths followed from the Conservative Club, The Ivy Leaf Club, The Red Cross, The Royal British Legion and the sea cadets, among others.

The procession then moved into the borough church where the service continued.

Crowd member Libby Tweedaler, aged eight, said: "You need to remember because people went to war and didn't come back because they fought for us."

In Twyford, the marching section of the Maidenhead Concert Band led a procession of guides, brownies, scouts and Loddon district explorers through the village to the

tunes On the Quarter Deck and Liberty Bell.

The parade was joined by members of the Royal British Legion and the parish council at Jubilee Corner.

In Marlow, more than 70 people gathered to see the parade march through town led by the Scots Guards pipe and drum band.

The Royal British Legion, Royal Naval Association, guides and scouts were represented in the parade along with Air and Army Cadets.

The first wreath was laid by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant Colonel Greg Smith and a service took place outside at the memorial.

On Friday, Armistice Day, a deodar cedar tree was planted outside the town hall after the two minutes silence which was marked by the firing of a canon.

The Mayor, Cllr Eric Wiles, planted the cedar in the newly-refurbished Town Hall Gardens with veteran George Murray to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and to demonstrate the council's commitment to peace and reconciliation.

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■ For even more pictures see the next two pages.



MARCHING IN MEMORY: Veterans remember fallen friends. Ref:90850/6



PAYING TRIBUTE: Deputy Mayor Beverley Green and Maidenhead MP Theresa May pay their respects. Ref:90850/8

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## ‘It was awful face-to-face combat’

STILL haunted by the good men he lost in Korea, a veteran of the forgotten war waits for a wheelchair at his home in Maidenhead.

Major Ken Leach has been crippled by arthritis in his legs, a legacy from jungle warfare in South East Asia and he is currently on an NHS waiting list for a wheelchair.

The 75-year-old joined the army at 16 and was later chosen as one of seven men to join an elite section known as the Detroit squad, an undercover troop sent in first or behind enemy lines.

The parent company to the squad was the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and the Detroit Squad is carved into stone in Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff, Mr Leach's home town.

After joining he was sent straight to Hong Kong to deal with Japanese war crimes in 1947, where he had to guard the prisoners and shoot them if they made any moves in court – an order he was forced to carry out.

He also guarded prisoners being transported back to Japan for sentencing.

Mr Leach said: "Some of them would try and jump ship but they were shot before they hit the water. After three years, I thought I was going home but I ended up in Africa."

In Africa, Mr Leach was behind enemy lines training Africans to shoot the Mau Mau during the insurgency by Kenyan rebels against the British colonial administration from 1952 to 1960. But after six months in Africa his return to Britain was short lived as the war in Korea began in 1950, a conflict between North Korea and South Korea.

The Detroit squad got caught up in the Battle of Imjim with the Gloucestershire Regiment, which is the only regiment allowed to wear a badge front and back of their beret to signify that they were reduced to fighting back-to-back. "It was awful face-to-face combat with bayonets," recounts Mr Leach.

In Borneo the seven men were sent into to combat against 200 Indonesians and for the occasion, Mr Leach was promoted to acting Major as there were not enough officers left.

"We called for two kippers [helicopters] and one of them flew off with a man still hanging on the rope as he got scared. I aimed a sub-machine gun at the other helicopter and told the pilot I would blow up it up if he flew away."



NOW AND THEN: Ken Leach. Ref:90863/2



Five of the seven men were killed that day and each year on August 20, Mr Leach wears a gold bullet around his neck for a week to remember the 'good men he lost'.

Mr Leach suffered from horrific flashback nightmares until recently, which have stopped with the help of his second wife, Anne. He said: "The men I lost, good men, still comes back to me – the sheer bloody waste of it."

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